

## **Helium Arts: Art Exhibitions**

**(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/115701>)**

### **Art exhibitions to highlight Helium Arts' growing work in supporting children at risk of social exclusion**

**Helium Arts** (<https://helium.ie/>) – the national children's charity committed to improving the wellbeing of children and young people living with lifelong physical health conditions – has announced details of two upcoming art exhibitions that it is presenting in Dublin and Ennis that highlight its growing work in the area of inclusion health, which supports children at risk of social exclusion.

Helium Arts is providing its creative health programme of free, artist-led creative workshops in paediatric clinics in Dublin and the Mid-West that serve children experiencing significant adversity, including children experiencing homelessness, those from marginalised migrant communities — such as international protection applicants and unaccompanied minors — and members of ethnic minority groups, including the Roma and Traveller community.

Both of the upcoming exhibitions will feature artworks created by children and young people with lifelong physical health conditions while attending paediatric inclusion health clinics for under-16s at the Lynn Clinic at Children's Health Ireland (CHI) in Dublin, and in paediatric clinics in Ennis Hospital, Tyone Health Centre in Nenagh and University Hospital Limerick in the Mid-West region.

Announcing the Dublin and Ennis exhibitions, **founder and CEO of Helium Arts Helene Hugelsaid**: "We know from research that children from disadvantaged backgrounds who have a life-long condition are three times more likely to be hampered by their condition. This can lead to lower life satisfaction, particularly for children whose daily activity is impaired due to their condition or disability. It can also impact their self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and chances in life.\* Our partnerships with the Lynn Clinic at CHI in Dublin and with paediatric clinics through HSE Mid-West enables us to make creative opportunities accessible for marginalised children. This gives some of the most vulnerable children in Ireland the opportunity for connection, belonging, imagination and joy, made possible through the strength of community and collaboration of these partnerships."

Speaking about Helium Arts' inclusion health programme, **consultant paediatrician Dr Aoibhinn Walsh, who runs the Lynn Clinic in Dublin**, said: "To see children truly relax, engage and express themselves through the arts within a medical setting — especially those who have faced significant trauma and adversity — is profoundly moving. It transforms what could be a clinical experience into something joyful, creative and meaningful. I simply can't imagine the Lynn Clinic without the presence of Helium Arts."

### **Theme of Exhibitions — 'Journeys'**

The overarching theme of both exhibitions is 'Journeys', with the Ennis showcase having the sub-theme, 'Everything Begins Somewhere', while the Dublin showcase's sub-theme is 'For A Better Tomorrow'.

The project is funded by Creative Ireland through the Creative Youth Nurture Fund 2023-2025 and Creative Ireland's Creative Health and Wellbeing programme in conjunction with Tipperary County Council, Clare County Council and Limerick City and County Council.

**Director of Creative Ireland Tania Banotti** said: "Creative Ireland is proud to support the 'Journeys' exhibitions in Dublin and Ennis — powerful showcases of creativity, resilience and inclusion. Through the work of Helium Arts and their collaboration with the Lynn Clinic and Children's Health Ireland, these exhibitions give a voice to children and young people living with lifelong health conditions.

"Both exhibitions are supported through the Creative Youth Nurture Fund and the Creative Health and Wellbeing Pillar of the Creative Ireland Programme. These initiatives highlight our commitment to strengthening equity of access to creative activities for the most seldom heard children and young people. This work exemplifies Helium Art's vision of an Ireland where all children are connected to their creative powers so they can live life to the full."

Helium Arts has also been awarded a RTÉ Toy Show Appeal grant by Community Foundation Ireland to deliver a programme in paediatric clinics in the Mid-West.

Commenting on the art exhibitions, **chief executive of Community Foundation Ireland Denise Charlton**said: 'The magic

of the RTE Toy Show continues every day thanks to partners like Helium Arts. As a philanthropic hub, we believe that access to the arts is an equality issue. The colour, the joy, the excitement generated by art must be open to everyone. 'Journeys' allows us to share in the creativity of the young artists who have opened up their hearts. Congratulations to everyone involved from all of us at the Foundation and the Toy Show Appeal.'

## Inclusion Health Artist – Jinny Ly

Speaking about the concept behind the theme and sub-themes of the exhibitions, **the creative producer and curator of both exhibitions, Dublin-based artist Jinny Ly**, who is a child of Vietnamese boat refugees who resettled in California, United States, said: "The Ennis exhibition is about the children's journey in building independence, confidence and self-esteem. As for the Dublin exhibition, parents and children are walking on a path towards hope and a better life and a better future. Some families can't speak English; some have limited English. But regardless of language, art has a way of telling a story or sharing an experience without words — allowing us to build pathways between communities."

Jinny added: "In my experience, children from refugee families and marginalised communities have to grow up really fast and that's why Helium Arts' workshops and activities are so important for them — so that they can play and be creative, as children should."

## Exhibition Details

Alongside the art exhibitions in Dublin and Ennis, special events will take place, including on Cruinniú na nÓg on 7th June, for families and young people living with lifelong physical health conditions and also for the general public.

The dates and details for each location are as follows:

### Ennis

The Ennis exhibition, titled 'Journeys – Everything Begins Somewhere', is taking place at **Súil Gallery, Ennis, Co Clare** from **Saturday, 24th May to Saturday, 7th June 2025** during gallery opening hours. It will also feature artworks created with Helium Arts during community workshops in counties Clare, Limerick and Tipperary by young people with lifelong physical health conditions.

Special events happening in tandem with the exhibition in Súil Gallery, Ennis are:

- A family-friendly exhibition launch celebration on Saturday, 24th May from 2-3:30pm, with everyone welcome. Registration is welcomed in advance for this free event by emailing [info@helium.ie](mailto:info@helium.ie) (<mailto:info@helium.ie>).
- On Cruinniú na nÓg on 7th June, from 10:30am to 12 midday, a free creative taster workshop is taking place exclusively for children (ages 8–12) living with lifelong physical health conditions, with professional artists and on-site medical support. Registration is required in advance by emailing [hello@helium.ie](mailto:hello@helium.ie) (<mailto:hello@helium.ie>) with '7th June Workshop' in the subject line.
- On Cruinniú na nÓg on 7th June, an Open Studio drop-in event is happening from 2-4pm. All are welcome to experience this art taster, with no booking required and free entry.

### Dublin

The Dublin exhibition, titled 'Journeys – For a Better Tomorrow', is taking place at the **Studios/Stables at IMMA at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham** from **Thursday 5th to Saturday, 7th June**, 10.30am-4pm daily. It is presented in partnership with the Research and Learning Programme at IMMA

Special events happening alongside the exhibition at the Studios/Stables at IMMA are:

- A family-friendly exhibition launch celebration on Thursday, 5th June from 2-3.30pm, with everyone welcome. Registration is welcomed in advance for this free event by emailing [info@helium.ie](mailto:info@helium.ie) (<mailto:info@helium.ie>).
- On Cruinniú na nÓg on 7th June, from 10:30am, a free drop-in workshop facilitated by a professional artist is taking place, with everyone welcome and no advance booking required.

The Dublin and Ennis exhibitions are open to the public, admission is free and both will also feature fun, free activities for all ages.

**For more information see <https://helium.ie> (<https://helium.ie>)**

### Region

Ennis, Co Clare & Dublin 8

[More Information \(https://helium.ie/\)](https://helium.ie/)

**Date Entered/Updated**

19th May, 2025

**Expiry Date**

7th Jun, 2025

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